

# SCISSORS AND GLUE:

## TYNJANOV'S THEORY OF VERSE LANGUAGE AND THE NOTION OF MONTAGE IN THE EARLY EISENSTEIN

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0. In the second half of the 1920's the relatively young film-medium had obtained the status of an autonomous art form. It had emancipated itself from the dominant influences of adjoining arts such as the theatre, photography and painting. Furthermore, it had developed a system of visual presentation, so that the comprehensibility of a film no longer demanded frequent insertions of explanatory titles, i.e., texts projected on the screen. Due to the development of the technique of montage, it was now possible to convey complex ideas and emotions in films. The process of montage — selection, cutting, timing and arrangement of visual material into a film continuity, had proven to be of essential importance for the effective production of a film, and particularly within the practical limitations of silent, black-and-white cinema montage became the major constructive device. The most influential theoretician on this subject is undoubtedly Sergei Eisenstein.

Eisenstein's theory of montage evolved simultaneously with the formation of Russian Formalism — the leading movement in European literary criticism and theory of the 1920's. Below we will try to establish the interrelationships between the early notion of montage in Eisenstein's works of that period and the major achievements of the Russian

formalists in their studies of the language of poetry, in particular the works of Jurij Tynjanov, a brilliant Russian scholar, writer and a notable figure in the Soviet cinema of 1920–1930's.

1. A combination of these two names, Eisenstein and Tynjanov, doesn't look artificial. Both were born in pre-revolutionary Latvia: Tynjanov — in Rezhitsa City, 1894; Eisenstein — in Riga, 1898. Both studied in St. Petersburg: Tynjanov — at the Department of Philology, St. Petersburg University; Eisenstein — at the Institute of Civil Engineering. Both passed away before they were 50, in the prime of life. And what is more important: they were acquainted. At the very end of the 1930's Eisenstein planned to shoot a film on the fabulous Russian poet Pushkin: *The Love of a Poet*<sup>1</sup>. The screenplay had to be based on the novel *Pushkin* by Tynjanov and on one of his articles devoted to Pushkin. It was supposed to be a film in colour, the first in Eisenstein's practice. In this film Eisenstein intended to use the basic possibilities of colour in cinema as fully as it was possible for that time. In a private letter Eisenstein wrote to Tynjanov that in this film colour would not be just used as "painting," but would be an "inherently essential dramatic factor"<sup>2</sup>. But the Second World War and Tynjanov's sudden death in 1943 put an end to this project.

Furthermore, Eisenstein was well acquainted with the major literary works of Tynjanov, such as *Pushkin*<sup>3</sup> and *The Wax Person*<sup>4</sup>. And what is perhaps even more important for our study, he referenced and quoted those of Tynjanov's theoretical works which formed the general body of the Russian Formalism heritage: *Dostoevsky and Gogol: Toward a Theory of Parody*<sup>5</sup> (1921) and *The Problem of Verse Language*<sup>6</sup> (1924). The latter is of interest to us in connection with the notion of

montage, but before we start discussing it we would like to proceed with some necessary additional remarks concerning Tynjanov's activity in the cinema.

2. Tynjanov's work in the cinema received its first official acknowledgment in a newspaper announcement on October 25, 1925: he was acting as consultant on the production of *The Overcoat*<sup>7</sup>, for which he was also in charge of the script<sup>8</sup>. Tynjanov was just thirty-one years old at the time, but he had already gained an impressive reputation as a literary historian and theoretician through the publication of his works on Dostoevsky and Gogol and on the problems of the language of poetry (both are mentioned above). In addition, his first historical novel *K'ukhl'a* (1925) was at the printer's. He had become a popular and respected lecturer on literary topics, especially nineteenth-century poetry, at the State Institute of the History of Arts in Leningrad. It was at that particular institute that he lectured during the years 1921–29. He would also soon be delivering occasional lectures at the FEKS Workshop<sup>9</sup>. The FEKS factory had been established in 1922 (while it in reality began grouping together in 1920–21) by the very young, “eccentric” theatre enthusiasts and famous-to-be Soviet film directors, Leonid Trauberg (1902–1989) and Grigorij Kozintcev (1905–1973)<sup>10</sup>. It has been written that Tynjanov delivered his lectures at the FEKS Workshop “without any confusion” — in other words, he was probably greatly amused — by the fact that they would be followed by lessons given by Tserep, the clown, or by Lustalo, the former boxing champion<sup>11</sup>.

In the period of 1924–29 Tynjanov published the only six film articles<sup>12</sup> he would ever write in his entire and otherwise greatly pro-

lific life. One of these, "On the Sjuzhet and Fabula in Film" (1926), was the outcome of his plans for a series of lectures on the topic at the State Institute of the History of Arts. It was later reworked as Sections 11 and 12 in Tynjanov's most substantial contribution to film theory, "On the Fundamentals of Film" (1927), published in the Formalist miscellany *The Poetics of the Cinema*. Boris Eikhenbaum was the editor of the *Poetics of the Cinema*, a concerted intellectual effort to reveal the meaning of film that should have been, by that time, recognized as one of the most important (if not the most important) contributions to film theory prior to 1929 or 1930. Eikhenbaum also made a substantial contribution to film theory with his own article there, "The Problems of the Stylistics of Film"<sup>13</sup>.

In his own article, Tynjanov intentionally skirts the thematic, ideological (politically engaged) and historical approaches to film that had occupied most commentators in the 1920's. He rejects the misconception of the cinema as "Velikij Nemoj" ("The Great Mute"). He discusses "fabula" and "sjuzhet" in comparison to these same concepts in literature. He polemicizes with Béla Bálasz and replaces his "der sichtbare Mensch" with his own "hero" of cinematic art, "novyj chelovek" ("the new man"), who is a complex of semantic signs.<sup>14</sup> Tynjanov takes the previously catalogued technical devices of film and discusses their "signifying functions."<sup>15</sup> His "semiotic perspective"<sup>16</sup> on the cinema constitutes his most relevant contribution to theoretical discourse on film that has been evolving since the late 1960's (film semiotics, the praxis of theory in certain avant-garde film and video movements). It is pertinent to note here that Tynjanov's concept of "sjuzhet" in the cinema included stylistics, and was not merely a concept concerned with the ordering of plot elements. He defined film techniques as

“stylisticsemantic means”<sup>17</sup>; ciné-stylistics were considered to be a factor that determines “sjuzhet,” and, indeed, style was seen to be a component of a broader concept of “sjuzhet”<sup>18</sup>. Tynjanov did not deny the representational functions of photography or cinematography, but he did not accept the legitimacy of verisimilitude as the sole criterion of the cinematic.<sup>19</sup> And he stipulated that “deformation” which was one of the shortcomings of photography had thus become an “aesthetic quality” in cinema.<sup>20</sup>

Besides his theoretical works Tynjanov wrote two scripts for FEKS: *The Overcoat* (mentioned above) and *S.V.D./Sojuz Velikogo Dela* (*The Union of the Great Deed*, 1927). There are several features in *The Overcoat* that should be given some attention here. The style of acting and the cinematography can perhaps be described as expressionistic. Despite the fact that some Soviet critics fell all over themselves in their attempts to deny the influence of German Expressionism, and despite Kozintcev’s own denials that Expressionist films had any influence on *The Overcoat*<sup>21</sup>, these are in reality feeble denials. It is not important whether or not such films as *Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari* (1919), *Der Müde Tod* (1921), *Nosferatu* (1922), or *Der Letzte Mann* (1924) were in some way the stylistic antecedents of the FEKS’ film. It is important to note that stylization of *The Overcoat* is maintained throughout the main character’s (Akakij Akakievitch) subjective view of the world. The “distortions” of reality are substantially motivated by his peculiarly myopic view of reality. *The Overcoat* cannot be considered as an example of Realism in the cinema. If one can say that any film’s “world” is a pseudo-world (it is the fictional world of narrative cinema, not of documentary films or filmreportage), then Akakij’s world is twice removed from any conventional notions of real-

ity. This was the first Soviet film to make sustained use of the so-called subjective camera, to render Akakij's line of vision and his vision of the world (i.e., his psychological apprehension of events, things and people). The lighting, shooting angles, decor and costumes create a "spectral", "irreal", "Gogolian" Petersburg, which conforms to Tynjanov's rendition.<sup>22</sup>

The third and last of Tynjanov's filmscripts to be produced as a film was *Poruthcik Kizhe* (*Lieutenant Kizhe*) based on his own long short story of the same name. The first variant of the script was written in 1927 for a silent film and what is strikingly significant is that it was completed before the story itself, but for several reasons this production did not take place, and Tynjanov published the literary version of the script as a novella. In 1933 Tynjanov reworked the script, and it was realized as a sound film in Belgoskino (Minsk, 1934).<sup>23</sup> Formally, the director of *Lieutenant Kizhe* was a young and unknown Soviet director Alexander Fajnzimmer, but there is some evidence that Tynjanov himself took an active part in the shooting and actually acted as co-director.<sup>24</sup> *Lieutenant Kizhe* can be considered as a realization of Tynjanov's theoretical standings in practice (we will discuss the film from this point of view later).

In the late 1920's Tynjanov, in cooperation with Veniamin Kaverin who was a young Soviet writer at the time, wrote another filmscript which, unfortunately, was never produced. The title of this script was *Window over the Water* (*Okno nad vodoj*). The action took place in one room (and never left it), and the film was to be shot from the three different points of view belonging to each of the three main characters. *Window over the Water* was rejected by Lenfilm on the grounds that the basic distinctive feature of the cinema — "the free-

dom of space” — had been ignored by the authors.<sup>25</sup> (Many years later, Akira Kurosawa shot his *Rashomon* and Sidney Lumet — his *Twelve Angry Men*.)

Jurij Tynjanov had an intellectual career of distinction and of a diversity that surpassed that of most of his immediate forebearers and contemporaries. He was a novelist, a theorist, a literary historian, a lecturer, a translator (he was in fact the translator of Heine from German) and, something often overlooked in bibliographies, an editor. Even in the context of this relatively large and variegated output, it would be erroneous to ascribe Tynjanov's involvement with the cinema to the passing fancy of a dilettante. In fact, the most impressive thing about Tynjanov's film career is that he contributed so much in so very few years (essentially the period between 1925–29), while producing at the same time a very large number of works that did not relate directly to the cinema, but rather to literature (fiction, theory, critique, editing). But one must be wary of the academic prejudices that “compartmentalize” the cinema by separating it from literature, and that all too frequently deny the cinema its rightful place among the manifestations of human culture deemed “valid” as fields of scholarly endeavour. Tynjanov's writings on and for the cinema including both his articles and his filmscripts, provide ample evidence that he recognized the distinction between the cinema and literature as well as the complex interrelationships between them. His approach to film as “text”, the acknowledgment that the film-making process involves the “production of meaning”, ensures the continuing significance of his “film-work” to the present day.

chenija poeticheskogo jazyka — Society for the Study of Poetic Language) based in Petrograd. Tynjanov entered it about 1920. His major work within OPOJAZ, *The Problem of Verse Language*, was published in 1924 in Leningrad by the Academia Press.<sup>25</sup> It was part of a series entitled *Questions of Poetics (Voprosy poetiki)*, which included Tomashevsky's *Russian Versification* and Boris Eikhenbaum's *Through Literature*. The original title of the work, however, was not *The Problem of Verse Language*, but *The Problem of Verse Semantics (Problema stikhovoj semantiki)*. Tynjanov had been working on and around problems of semantics in verse for several years. In 1919 he read a series of lectures entitled "Language and the Image" at the House of Arts in Petrograd. He revised and expanded his material during the next few years, delivering two lectures to the State Institute of the History of Arts entitled "The Problem of Verse Semantics." These lectures were read on February 25 and March 4, 1923. Tynjanov also read his work at the gatherings of OPOJAZ members at this time. The work was completed and ready for printing, but for some unknown reason, it was decided to first publish the above-mentioned texts by Tomashevsky and Eikhenbaum. Tynjanov's book was published a year later and under a different title. As Tynjanov himself explained this fact the title was changed by the publisher who "became afraid of the title *The Problem of Verse Semantics*."<sup>26</sup>

3.2. In *The Problem of Verse Language* Tynjanov is concerned with investigating two perspectives in the text. The first is the separation of the concept of "poetry" from that of verse. For Tynjanov, "poetry" is a prescientific conglomeration of undistilled emotions and hazy, subjective opinions. Tynjanov very seldom uses the term "poetry" (in Rus-



sian, "poezija"), and when he does, it is usually placed in quotation marks or used in an ironic sense. As he states clearly, it is *verse* (in Russian, "stikh") which is the subject of analysis here. All the material conditions which we associate with verse structure are foregrounded by Tynjanov. It is precisely only these conditions (or features) of verse which are capable of being subjected to thorough scientific investigation. Verse, then, is a noetic object rather than an emotional one.<sup>27</sup>

Having separated verse ("stikh") from poetry ("poezija"), Tynjanov proceeds on using the term "verse" in a much more crucial way. It is precisely in this second examination of verse, which now stands in opposition to *prose* (in Russian, "proza"), that the theoretical pivot of the text is located. The central question that subordinates all other questions in the text to itself is: what are the specific conditions of verse? To use the language which Tynjanov and Roman Jakobson use in their celebrated joint thesis<sup>28</sup>, what specifically is it that specifically separates verse from all other areas of intellectual activity? As Roman Jakobson points out in one of his papers<sup>29</sup>, defining the specificity of one's area of inquiry was the dominant concern of the majority of the Russian Formalists' texts. In order to be worthy of the title of "science," literary theory and criticism must pass beyond the phase of mere description of subjective states of mind. It must define, delimit and identify in concrete and precise ways the distinctive features of a particular subset of verbal activity (for example, verse). We would like to turn to this one particular aspect of Tynjanov's book, which is related to the process of the meaning-formation of the word in verse.

3.3. Tynjanov's basic notion concerning the meaning of a word is as

follows: "A word does not have one definite meaning. It is a chameleon, in which not only various shades, but even various colours arise with each usage."<sup>30</sup> A word is just a frame which could be filled in by any sense. One cannot understand the concrete meaning of the word if it were used separately from the clause, if it were isolated from the syntactic structure. Tynjanov declares: "The word does not exist outside of the clause."<sup>31</sup> In other words, the proper, or "dictionary", meaning of the word must be ignored by the researcher of verse. His task is to establish the particular meaning of the given word in one particular text, or even more so, in one particular clause.

Since the proper meanings of the words are not significant for the researcher at all, Tynjanov establishes a new category of elements which make up verse. He describes them as "'empty' words in the broad sense of the term, which receive a type of 'apparent semantics' in verse."<sup>32</sup> This "apparent semantics" is "defined by the construction of the artistic work"<sup>33</sup>, it is created by its formal environment and through the constructive organization of the material. In this connection, Tynjanov prescribes: 1) there is a partial, or, in some cases, complete absence of "dictionary content" in the appearances of the words in verse; and, 2) the word in verse bears a particular semantic value according to its position. Words prove to be in stronger and closer correlations and connections inside the verse series and unities than in ordinary speech. This strength of connection affects rather powerfully the character of the semantics.

Moreover, in a given series (in verse), the word may be quite "empty," that is, 1) the basic, or principal sign of its "dictionary" meaning may introduce an extremely small new element, if any, or, 2) it might not even be quite connected with the general "sense" of the

rhythmical and syntactic unity.<sup>34</sup> Tynjanov claims that the particular meaning of the word in this given unity is established by the “compactness”<sup>35</sup> of the verse series. “The fact of the matter is that *oscillating signs* (Tynjanov’s italics — E.V. & J.S.) of meaning may advance, defined by the compactness of the series (by the compact proximity). These may be intensified at the expense of the principal sign and in place of it, creating a ‘semblance of meaning’ or an ‘apparent meaning’.”<sup>36</sup>

Thus, any word (even a neutral one from the point of view of semantics or stylistics) acquires an original meaning within that one particular verse series and it keeps this meaning only while it has its place in this series. According to Tynjanov, the sense of each word in verse “is a result of an orientation toward an adjacent word.”<sup>37</sup>

3.4. Here we can turn to the origin of the notion of montage in the early Soviet cinema. As is well-known, the first experiments in montage were carried out by Lev Kuleshov in the early 1920’s. Kuleshov shot two different shots in two different places and at two different times, and then he glued them together. This combination of two shots (non-connected in actual reality) created in the mentality of the spectators a sense of simultaneity and connectedness between the presented events.<sup>38</sup>

In a different attempt, Kuleshov took one close-up of the calm face of Ivan Mozhukhin, the great Russian actor, and glued it together with some other “independent” shots. This artificial combination created in the spectators different emotions and notions. For example, the quiet and emotionless face of Mozhukhin stuck together with the shot of a bowl of soup gave rise to an impression of hunger; or, the same

close-up of his face glued together with the shot presenting a woman crying over a coffin created a sense of deep grief.

Here, we are faced with the same process of the building of meaning as described above by Tynjanov. Thus, in verse two neutral (from a "dictionary" point of view), or, "empty", words (for example, "a rose" and "black") after having been taken together create a new meaning (for example, "sorrow"). In Kuleshov's experiments we deal with the same process: the cool and emotionless face of an actor is "empty," it contains no sense or meaning; and whatever emotions or senses are attributed to it are only a result of the succeeding shot. This succeeding shot (often "empty", as well: for example, a basin of soup) is the shot that created the meaning of the previous one; and in this case the signs of meaning are, in Tynjanov's terms, "oscillating," i. e., "oscillating" within the limits of the great variety of possible senses and emotions: from "hunger" to "grief".

This process found its theoretical manifestation in Eisenstein's works in the 1920's. In 1929, investigating Chinese-Japanese hieroglyphs, Eisenstein wrote: "The point is that the copulation (perhaps we had better say, the combination) of two hieroglyphs of the simplest series is to be regarded not as their sum, but as their product, i.e., as a value of another dimension, another degree; each, separately, corresponds to an *object* (Eisenstein's italics — E.V. & J.S.), to a fact, but their combination corresponds to a *concept* (Eisenstein's italics — E.V. & J.S). From separate hieroglyphs has been fused — the ideogram. By the combination of two 'depictables' is achieved the representation of something that is graphically undepictable.

For example: the picture for water and the picture of an eye signifies 'to weep'; the picture of an ear near drawing of a door = 'to

listen'; a dog+a mouth = 'to bark'; a mouth+a child = 'to scream'; a mouth+a bird = 'to sing'; a knife+a heart = 'sorrow', and so on."<sup>39</sup> Here, Eisenstein describes the way how meanings and notions are formed. If we continued his series of equations leading to new meanings, we predictably arrive at such an equation as the following: scissors+glue = montage. "But this is—montage! / Yes. It is exactly what we do in the cinema, combining shots that are *depictive* (Eisenstein's italics—E.V. & J.S.), single in meaning, neutral in content—into *intellectual* (Eisenstein's italics—E.V. & J.S.) contexts and series. This is a means and method inevitable in any cinematographic exposition. And, in a condensed a purified form, the starting point for the 'intellectual cinema'."<sup>40</sup>

Thus, the formal similarity between the ways of producing sense in verse and in cinema is quite obvious. At the very heart of each approach lies the principle of combination, or copulation, of two bearers of neutral information. But, as can be seen from above, Eisenstein applies the notion of montage to "intellectual cinema"; and in his book Tynjanov analyses the best, or those same "intellectual," samples of European poetry. Both of them deal with that particular technique of producing images which can be evaluated as "intellectual". As far as Eisenstein is concerned, he develops his theory of montage as a theory which during its implementation into practice provides the creations of meanings and images of the "highest mental level." Each one of his films could be considered as a "system" within which his theory is embodied into concrete visual images. We borrow the word "system" from Tynjanov's investigation of verse. Eisenstein uses the word "organicness"<sup>41</sup>, but both, "system" and "organicness," are used by Tynjanov and Eisenstein to define the structure of the verse or cinema-

text as an organic whole, where every unit takes its exact place, and its connections with the other units are considered and subordinated to the organizing logic of the whole thing.

3.5. The word “system” in Tynjanov’s sense may be applied to Eisenstein’s montage theory and practice. It is, however, a system which is constantly developing, to which Eisenstein adds ever newer shades and refinements for the best results. In 1923, while still working as a theater director for Proletkul’t, in an essay called “Montazh attrakcionov” (“Montage of Attractions”), he stated that the function of theatre should be the promotion of the active participation on the part of spectators in everyday life with the purpose of stimulating them in their desire to build up the new Communist society. The aim of a theatre production should be, to guide an audience towards a desired, intellectually perceived, ideological conclusion, “a mounting of the spectator in the desired direction (mood)”<sup>42</sup>.

Having in mind this purpose, Eisenstein proposes a new spectacular type of construction, related to the avangarde experiments of the famous director Vs. Mejerhold. This new type of construction was very fragmentary and disjointed, radically breaking with the tradition of naturalistic, psychological drama, where the elements of the play are held together by the constraints of plot development. In Eisenstein’s spectacle the selection of elements is not determined by plot constraints, the main selection criterion is their potential for influence. Similar to all the components of the spectacle, the plot elements should also function as “attractions,” i.e., as aggressive elements. They must evoke strong emotional and psychological reactions into the spectators. Therefore, the plot is broken down into its most spectacular constitu-

ents. The selection and combination of these “attractions” have to be “mathematically calculated” in order to produce certain emotional shocks which, presented in the proper order, will, as a whole, make possible an inevitable ideological (intellectual) conclusion.

Eisenstein had already put his theory into practice with the production of *Mudretc* (*The Sage*)<sup>43</sup>. It is generally regarded as the most remarkable of Eisenstein’s theatre productions. It was an erratic montage arrangement of contrasting “attractions”, a sequence of shock effects: a montage of facts from reality, fragments of representation (“izobrazitel’nyje kuski”), and remnants of a coherent plot structure, presented in the form of circus and music-hall acts, and film fragments projected on the screen, parodying the American detective genre. The final shock of *Mudretc* was of a purely physical nature: a round of fire-crackers under the chairs of the audience.

We can derive several characteristic aspects of Eisenstein’s theory as presented in “Montage of Attractions”, which remain of central importance in his works. These aspects are: 1) the search for a synthesis of the intellectual (cognitive) connotations and emotional effects of the shokingly sensuous, in particular visual representations; 2) a utilitarian tendency, adjusted to the radical agitorial concepts of left-wing Proletcult; 3) the orientation towards the spectator as “material” to be ideologically organized and/or manipulated.

The basic theoretical point in Eisensteinian theory was established as a creation of a new type of an “influencing reality” (on stage or on screen) through: 1) the cutting of the existing reality into autonomous pieces (“empty words”), 2) the intentional selection of these autonomous elements from the “dictionary of empty words,” and 3) their glueing together in order to produce new meanings and senses.

Eisenstein considers each of his films as one additional attempt to implement his theory. Thus, he comments on his *Strike*: "The film had no story in the generally accepted sense: there were the progressive stages of a strike, there was a "montage of attractions". According [ly] (sic — E.V. & J.S.) to my artistic principle, we did not depend on intuitive creativeness but on a rational construction of affective elements; each affect must be subjected previously to a thorough analysis and calculation: this is the most important thing."<sup>44</sup>

In his essay "Perspektivy" ("The Perspectives", 1929) Eisenstein elaborates further on the subject of the "peaceful coexistence" between science and the arts within the limits of the artistic work. He attempts to overcome the dichotomy of science versus art, "jazyk logiki — jazyk obrazov" ("the language of logic" — "the language of images"): "We do not wish to oppose science to art as the bearers of two different qualities. We want to compare one with the other according to these qualities, and, proceeding from this comparison, to synthesize a new unified kind of a socially influencing factor."<sup>45</sup>

3.6. At the same time when Eisenstein was putting his theory into practice, Tynjanov wrote to his close friend Victor Shklovsky, one of the best representatives of the OPOJAZ circle: "I consider my novels simply as the experiences of my scientific fantasy, that's all. I think, that the fiction based on historical material will soon pass away; and instead, we will have fiction based on theory. The theoretical age is coming to us."<sup>46</sup> It can be concluded from the program of OPOJAZ that with respect to literature, cinema is a minor direction in the evolution of art. Therefore the members of OPOJAZ, including Tynjanov and Shklovsky, considered cinema merely as a field for the application



and verification of their own theoretical statements.

As it was mentioned in §3.3 Tynjanov was interested in the so-called “empty words” and, moreover, in the parts of the “empty words”. In his *The Problem of Verse Language* Tynjanov describes precisely how the parts of words (suffixes and endings) obtain their own “oscillating signs of meaning” because of the compactness of verse series. In other words, he establishes that absolute emptiness (suffixes and especially endings are “empty” from the “dictionary” point of view) acquires relative significance only owing to its particular casual environment.<sup>47</sup> Analysing one particular case of the emphasizing on suffixes and endings in one of the poems by Mayakovsky, he says: “This emphasizing of parts of a word disturbs the correlation between the material and formal elements (and thus complicates the principal sign with oscillating signs. It makes the word, as Mayakovsky himself once noted, ‘fantastic.’ (That is, it promotes the advancement of oscillating signs in the words.)”<sup>48</sup>

Tynjanov defines such “empty” words and parts of words as “semantic gaps.” He points out that “in the system of interaction generated by the dynamics of verse and of speech, there may be semantic gaps, filled up indifferently in the semantic relationship by a word which indicates the dynamics of the rhythm. Undoubtedly, this is where the feature of the choice of words lies.”<sup>49</sup> Tynjanov writes that a word, or even a part of it, sometimes arises according to its significance in verse. Even if the word (or part of it) is “empty” to the the highest (both “dictionary” and ideological) degree, “it acquires a *semblance of meaning* (Tynjanov’s italics — E.V. & J.S.) and is ‘semasiologized’ (Tynjanov’s term “semasiologizuetca”, i.e., “fills itself with meaning” — E.V. & J.S.). It is unnecessary to say that the

semantics of the word is by its very nature distinguished from its semantics in a prosaic construction, where there is no compactness of the series.”<sup>50</sup>

Tynjanov notes that this is why in verse (and yet, is it in verse only?) instead of “thought” we have the “value of great thought” or the “equivalent of meaning”. Instilled into the verse construction, the indifferent (since it is “foreign” according to its principal sign) word develops the intensity of an oscillating signs instead of developing the principal “dictionary” sign. This is why words in verse which are intimately connected with an object have such great semantic significance. “Where these connections with objects are absent, the principal sign disappears, and in its place may advance a *lexical coloring*. *Oscillating signs* (both italics are Tynjanov’s — E.V. & J.S.) arise in the construction.”<sup>51</sup> This principle can be easily disclosed in the montage constuctions in film. For example, the famous montage comparison of Kerensky and a clock-peacock in Eisenstein’s “October” is based on the same theoretical grounds. Objectively neutral from the representational point of view, Kerensky starts to lose his “neutrality” and begins to acquire a “negative” sense only because he is stuck together with the shot of a clock-peacock. In its own turn, this peacock loses its basic semantic significance (propely, the decorative detail of a clock) and obtains now the “oscillating signs” because of its “lexical colouring”, i. e., the basic “dictionary” meaning “sinks” and the secondary features of the associative semantics (such as, “empty-mindedness,” “pomposity”, “groundless feeling of self-importance and beauty”) come out to the foreground and start to work. The compactness of the series (the shots of Kerensky and the clock-peacock are given together as one par-

adigm) automatically transfers the “oscillating signs” of the peacock to Kerensky. Thus, the chair of the so-called “Provisional Government” of Russia in 1917 acquires the “oscillating signs” of a self-loving dictator in accordance with the ideological position of Eisenstein and “the Party and government” standing behind him, but not according to the “objective” historical reality.

3.7. As far as the process of “semalogization” of the words’ parts in a particular verse series (or in a given “montage series”) is concerned, Tynjanov’s creative activity in the cinema gives us a very significant example of application of his theory in practice. It was already mentioned in §2 that originally Tynjanov’s *Lieutenant Kizhe* was written not as a novella but as a filmscript. The main theoretical idea of Tynjanov was to demonstrate how an image could be created from total emptiness, from practically nothing; how absolute emptiness (“nothingness”) could obtain ideological importance and objective significance.

Tynjanov takes one historical anecdote as a basis for his filmscript. The plot of *Lieutenant Kizhe* is based on apocryphal incidents recorded in a collection of anecdotes about the reign of the Russian Emperor Pavel I (Paul I; 1754–1801)—the creation of a non-existent officer by a clerical error, and the demise of a living one “for the same reason.”<sup>52</sup> A clerk while compiling an official document makes a mistake: he uses twice (instead of once) a part of the suffix of a noun (“-k-”), an ending of the plural form (“-i”), followed by a combination with a particle (“zhe”). The ensuing result is the following: “Podporutchiki kizhe” instead of “Podporutchiki zhe” (in the English translation we have “Lieutenants nants” instead “Lieutenants”<sup>53</sup>); and after this

mistake the clerk writes out a list of the military officers who are recommended for a promotion in rank. The clerk has no time to correct the mistake because the document has been urgently demanded by the Emperor who must sign it. Thus, Pavel I signs the paper (without looking at the text), and the non-existent Lieutenant Kizhe steps into real historical ("biographical") life. The absolute emptiness (just the occasional combination of a suffix, an ending and a particle) is turned into a name ("Kizhe") which is spelled now with a capital K. The Emperor's officials do not dare to confess to Pavel I their a mistake, and a "miracle" starts functioning as a real person. He is exiled to Siberia as if he has committed a misdemeanour. He is forgiven by the unpredictable and crazy Emperor and is returned to the capital where he starts acquiring rank after rank, and in the end this invisible officer is made a colonel. Moreover, he gets married, he has a child (it happens sometimes), and then (thanks to the same court officers who succeeded in concealing their deception from the Emperor's rage) he is declared dead and buried with a lot of pomp and honours.

Parallel with the Kizhe story Tynjanov intended to develop an opposite plot tracing the destiny of Lieutenant Sin'ukhaev by means of parallel montage. Another error committed by a different clerk puts his name in the list of officers killed in some battle. This list is signed by a stubborn commander who even after having been informed of the mistake refuses to cancel his order. Thus, a living person is declared dead. Nobody considers Sin'ukhaev as a living human being any more. He leaves the military service, fails in numerous attempts to prove that he is still alive, and in the end, sinks in oblivion and darkness.

In other words, Tynjanov was trying to embody his theory on

the screen. The "empty" (meaningless from the "dictionary" point of view) parts of a word glued together with the "meaningful" words (the phantom, Kizhe, is placed between the term for a military rank, "lieutenants," and the names of the actually existing officers) obtain "oscillating signs of meaning"; and this is a result of the "orientation toward the adjacent words". The absolute emptiness functions in the film as a major constructive principle. Simultaneously, in Sin'ukhaev's story the living person turns into an absolute emptiness only because of "montage": his name glued together with the names of the dead men automatically forces the miserable Sin'ukhaev to disappear, i.e., to be turned into a nothing.<sup>54</sup>

To create an image of the "functioning emptiness" Tynjanov uses various means which could be defined as simultaneously literary, namely borrowed from the verse technique, and cinematic, namely the principle of montage. As a major literary means Tynjanov uses the notion of rhythm. He writes that the action of the unity of the verse series and of its "compactness" "has joined with the action of a more complex factor — the isolation of words in accord with their *greater rhythmical significance* (Tynjanov's italics — E.V. & J.S.)."<sup>55</sup> Tynjanov establishes the direct connection between the problem of the meaning of the word in one particular verse series and its rhythmical and syntactical environment. He verifies the fact of the alteration of the semantic significance of the word, which is achieved as a result of its rhythmical significance. In connection with the problem of rhythm, he investigates the process of dynamization of speech in verse, and he points out that the semantic significance of the word in verse is defined by the significance of its rhythm. The word can be dynamized with rhythm and in the course of this process of dynamization, it ac-

quires its particular meaning in verse.<sup>56</sup>

Tynjanov applies his verse theory to his investigations in the theory of cinema. In "On the Fundamentals of Film" he claims that a shot represents the same sort of unity as a verse line. In the shot the casual unity re-distributes the meanings of the items, and every item, every object turns out to be correlated with the other elements and with the whole shot. "The 'main characters' of a shot, like the words (and sounds) in verse, must be different and, moreover, *differentiated* (Tynjanov's italics — E.V. & J.S). Only after that they can correlate with each other. Only after that they can cooperate and colour each other with meanings."<sup>57</sup> Also Tynjanov transfers the notion of rhythm in verse into the description of film technique. He mentions: "Rhythm is an interaction of the stylistic and metric devices in the process of the development of the film, in its dynamics."<sup>58</sup>

In the script of *Lieutenant Kizhe* (the silent version) an image of a phantom comes into being along with the usage of 1) differentiated objects and details, 2) precise rhythmical structure, 3) consistent dynamization of the fragment:

"Shot 128. [The clerk is writing on the sheet of paper:]  
'Lieutena-...'

<...>

Shot 130. [Pavel I is waiting for the report with great impatience] He has broken off the order from his chest. He is knocking with it on a glass screen. He is knocking with it more and more frequently.

<...>

Shot 134. The order is knocking on the glass screen.

Shot 135. The clerk has already written the letter N and has

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frozen above it.

Shot 136. An officer, standing over the clerk, is pressing him to finish his work: ‘*-nts! -nts! -nts!*’

Shot 137. The trembling handbell.

Shot 138. The officer is stamping in a hurry, whispering, wheezing: ‘*Hurry up! Hurry up! Hurry up! Beast! Beast! Beast!*’

<...>

Shot 139a. [The final text on the paper:] ‘Lieutenants Nants, Platonov, Lubavskij are being recommended...’<sup>59</sup>

Here we are faced with parallel montage constructed along with the acceleration of the action. The rhythm of this acceleration is set by the angry Emperor, who is knocking on the glass screen with a metal order, and this fixed rhythm is caught up by the officer, who is repeating his words (in shot 138). The fundamental mistake, which underlies the very heart of the plot, comes formally as a result of the rhythmical beating of the objects (the order) and the words. For Tynjanov this rhythmical beating is the main constructive factor for the “condensation” and “compression” of the verse or shot series, and this factor generates the semantic transformations within the series.

4.1. In the case of Tynjanov’s script we deal with a significant example of the co-called “intellectual montage”. The notion of “intellectual montage” was established by Eisenstein in 1929, i.e., in the same year when Tynjanov wrote the silent version of the filmscript *Lieutenant Kizhe*. In his “Chetvertije izmerenije v kino” (“The Filmic Fourth Dimension”) Eisenstein classifies the types of montage as follows: 1) metric montage (which is based on the established combination of the pieces of different lengths); 2) rhythmic montage (an effect of which is

created by the combination of the pieces in accordance with their internal content or internal dynamics); 3) tonal montage (characterized by the emotional, or dominant, sounding of the piece); 4) overtone montage (as a next stage in the development of tonal montage, it "steps up the impression from a melodically emotional colouring to a directly physiological perception"<sup>60</sup>). Under number 5 Eisenstein places "intellectual montage" as the highest achievement of the technique of artistic editing. He defines the first four types of montage as "methods of montage," while the category of "intellectual montage" is established by Eisenstein as a device to turn the "methods of montage" into "montage structures". He claims that "intellectual montage is montage not of generally physiological overtone sounds, but of sounds and overtones of an intellectual sort: i.e., conflictjuxtaposition of accompanying intellectual affects."<sup>61</sup> In the case of intellectual montage a director operates with a wide variety of means from different areas of human mental activity. Thus, in his *Lieutenant Kizhe*, in the episode of the "birth" of an image from "emptiness" (described above), Tynjanov exploits simultaneously: 1) linguistic devices (the meaningless parts of a word and of speech), 2) filmic technical means (parallel montage, close-ups, credits), 3) musical-poetical facilities (rhythm, repetitions), 4) historical context ([a] the stern temper of Pavel I, who, according to the numerous apocryphal stories, was mad, or, at least, suffered from a strong nervous disorder, [b] in connection with the formula "from absolute emptiness to absolute importance", the story of the origin of Pavel I who, by some unofficial sources, was not a real Emperor but a peasant's son).

From the point of view of the "instruments" exploited by the Russian Formalists, it is very significant that in "The Filmic Fourth



Dimension" Eisenstein uses a similar terminology: "metric", "rhythmic", "overtonal". These terms can easily be used for the description of filmic or poetical techniques. Yet, for Eisenstein, they describe exclusively the formal facilities of the process of creation.

4.2. There is, however, one term common for both Eisenstein and the Russian Formalists in "The Filmic Fourth Dimension", namely — the "dominant" (in Russian, "dominanta"). Eisenstein uses this term to define the so-called "orthodox montage" ("ortodoksal'nyij montazh"): "Orthodox montage is montage *on the dominant* (Eisenstein's italics — E.V. & J.S.). I.e., the combination of shots according to their dominating indications. Montage according to tempo. Montage according to the chief tendency within the frame. Montage according to the length (continuance) of the shots, and so on. This is montage according to the foreground."<sup>62</sup> The montage effect can merely be achieved after the clashing interrelationships between the dominant indications of the two adjacent pieces<sup>63</sup> have been established. Eisenstein gives an example of a sequence of montage pieces "A gray old man. A gray old woman. A white horse. A snow-covered roof," and states that we cannot grasp what the principal meaning of this sequence is: "old age" or "whiteness", before we have the fifth shot-indicator with the obvious dominating feature.

At the same time, as R. Jakobson once observed, the notion of the "dominant" (along with the theory of "ostraneniye", or "defamiliarization") is one of the "most defining, elaborate and productive notions in the theory of Russian Formalism."<sup>64</sup> For the first time this term was used within the limits of verse theory: in his "Melodika stikha" ("Melodics of Verse", 1921) B. Eikhenbaum differentiates between sev-

eral types of versification according to the notion of the dominant features in the different communicative structures. In counterdistinction to an early OPOJAZ concept, according to which an artistic work was defined as the “sum” (montage, open series) of the heterogeneous “materials” and “devices” (the so-called “paradigmatic model” of the formalist method), the middle stage of the development of Russian Formalism is characterized by a great interest in the “connectedness”, “unity”, “compactness” (all the terms belonging to Tynjanov) of the artistic text. An artistic work is presented as an aggregate, a system of the heterogeneous, but at the same time hierarchized functions and values, which are perceived and distributed dynamically. From this point of view, a text itself “proposes” to a reader a series of potential features (the so-called “sign-indices”, “symptoms”), from which a perceiver chooses only one group, or one function. According to Tynjanov this group or function subordinates all the remaining functions, devices and values.<sup>65</sup>

The term “dominant” stands for the “constructive principle”<sup>66</sup>, which is the only one chosen by a perceiver from a series of principles available within the whole construction. The subordinated functions and values are under the process of “deformation” (“defamiliarization”) or, if we use the terminology of the early structuralistic formalists’ works, “transformation.” At the first stage of the elaboration of the notion “dominant” the Russian formalists did not pay much attention to the reasons conditioning the “choice” (motivation). The most important thing for them was the fact that the artistic “directions” of a poetical text, its intentionality, was always the “result” of a conflict, clash or tension between the different formatting elements<sup>67</sup> for their predominant position within the limits of any poetical system.

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It is significant that Eisenstein, who established the notion of “montage on the dominant,” defines the principle of montage as a conflict between various elements of the artistic construction, in general, and a conflict between two adjoined shots, in particular.<sup>68</sup> In his early studies of montage Eisenstein pays no attention to the principles and reasons of the director’s choice of the shots’ content (artistic and ideological). He was interested only in the conflict between shots, in what comes into being because of this clash. One can define his early investigations in the field of montage as purely formalistic. Later, due to different reasons, Eisenstein changes his position and starts paying much more attention to the content of the shots. The first move “towards the content” was accomplished by Eisenstein in his “The Filmmic Fourth Dimension”, where he to “montage on the dominant” opposes “overtonal” (or polyphonic) montage as an artistic device of a higher intellectual level.<sup>69</sup>

5. The theoretical investigations of the Russian Formalists, in general, and of Jurij Tynjanov, in particular, plays a very important part not only in the studies of verse language, but also in the general research of the creative processes. Parallel with them Sergei Eisenstein elaborates his theoretical and practical studies of montage, where he uses similar (and very often, identical) approaches, methods, and terminology. This parallelism is not just an occasional coincidence. Both Tynjanov and Eisenstein were deeply interested in the nature of the formal processes underlying any creative activity.

They tried to be as rational with respect to the process of “creation” as it was possible in their time. It is very significant that the artistic prose of Tynjanov is ostentiously “montagic”. In his novels,

such as *K'ukhl'a, Smert' Vazir-Mukhtara* (*The Death of Vazir-Mukhtar*), *Pushkin*, the development of action does not go along with the external line of the plot (which was typical of the so-called "realistic" prose), but with the permanent changes of the episodes and scenes, which have a different "tonal" and "overtonal" colouring.<sup>70</sup> The reticence and the outer "backwardness" of the external line of the plot are compensated for by the subtexts, the contrasting changes of the "shots:" plans, close-ups, scenes and other purely cinematographic devices (which were successfully transplanted by Tynjanov from the film technique into the art of verbal representation).

At the same time Eisenstein attempted to prove the possibility to transfer any type of verbal representation onto the screen. Suffice it to say that simultaneously with the projects to film James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Eisenstein intended to shoot a screen-version of *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx. He was absolutely sure in that if one mastered the technical principles of the constructive processes, one could create any possible construction.

Above, we have tried to describe some basic features of the formalistic endeavours in the Soviet Union mostly in the 1920's. Unfortunately, we have neither the time nor space to connect these searches with the notion of montage in Eisenstein's works of the 1930-40's. It would seem also very productive to establish a link between OPOJAZ's theoretical programme of the 1920's and the programme of the Prague Circle. We cannot ignore the fact that Tynjanov developed his theory of verse language while under the great influence of the German philosopher Broder Christiansen<sup>71</sup>, but this a subject for a separate specific scientific investigation.

Thus, the history of the general film theory (in its part con-

cerned with the notion of montage) is closely connected with the history of the formalistic studies, and the Russian Formalism of the 1920's, in particular. Perhaps, it is not accidental that the most important achievements in the formalistic studies were reached in the Soviet Union. Such erudite theoreticians and practitioners as Eisenstein and Tynjanov, while surrounded by "global emptiness", "absolute contentlessness" and "total imposture", could acutely and sensitively feel FORM, the only real thing which continued to exist in their (and yet, in theirs only?) actual reality.

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#### NOTES

1. Eisenstein, S. *Izbrannyje proizvedenija* , v 6 tomakh (*Collected Works, in 6 volumes*; below — *Collected Works*), Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1962–1971, vol.1, p.673.
2. Ibid., vol.1, p.672. See, also, for more details about the personal relationship between Eisenstein and Tynjanov in: Eisenstein S. "Tri pis'ma o tsvete" ("Three letters on Colour") in: Eisenstein. *Collected Works*, vol.1, p.522.
3. Ibid., vol.1, p.219; vol.3, p.496.
4. Ibid., vol.3, p.124; vol.4, p.311.
5. Ibid., vol.4, pp.451, 539.
6. Ibid., vol.1, p.505; vol.2, p.184.
7. The original Russian title — *Shinel'*. The film was based on the story by Nikolai Gogol. The directors: L. Trauberg, G. Kozintcev.
8. *Kino*, Leningrad, October 25, 1925.
9. Workshop of the "Factory of the Eccentric Actor"
10. The beginning of FEKS had been marked by the publication of the

"FEKS Manifestoes": *Ekstcentrism*, Petrograd, 1922. Their theater workshop became a film-acting workshop in 1924, and soon thereafter became a film company. FEKS was disbanded in 1929. *Ekstcentrism* is extremely difficult to find as text, but there is an English translation of it in *The Drama Revue*, vol.19, Nr.4, December 1975.

11. Zorkaja, N. "Tynjanov and Cinema", in: *Voprosy kinoiskusstva*, Moscow, No.10, 1965, p.265 (in Russian).
12. The articles are published together (in Russian) in: Tynjanov, J. *Poetika. Istorija literatury. Kino. (Poetics. History of Literature. Film; below — Poetics)* Moscow: Nauka, 1977.
13. This book, *The Poetics of the Cinema* (in Russian; Moscow/Leningrad, 1927; just 3500 copies were published), has been reprinted by Berkeley Slavic Specialties in 1984.
14. Tynjanov. *Poetics*, pp.326-348.
15. Film techniques had been catalogued in: Timoshenko, S. *The Art of Cinema and Montage of Film* (in Russian), Leningrad, 1926. Tynjanov's much more imaginative discussion of the "ideological" significance of film devices comes in sections 3, 5, 6-8, 10 and 13 of "On the Fundamentals of Film".
16. An expression used as a section title in Herbert Eagles's "Introduction" to an English translation of *The Poetics of the Cinema* in: *Russian Formalist Film Theory*, Michigan Slavic Materials, No.19, Ann Arbor, 1981.
17. Tynjanov. *Poetics*, p.344.
18. There is some support for this opinion in an article by Tzvetan Todorov, wherein the author uses, significantly, Tynjanov's film article in his attempt to clarify the Formalists' application of their ter-

- minology in their various literary analyses, see: Todorov T. "Some Approaches to Russian Formalism", in: *Russian Formalism*, ed. S. Bann and J. Bowlt, New York, 1976, pp.12, 16-17.
19. Tynjanov devotes to this problem sections 1-4, 8 and 13 of his article.
  20. Tynjanov. *Poetics*, p.335.
  21. Kozintcev, G. *Collected Works in 5 volumes*, vol.1, pp.109-110, Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1982.
  22. Tynjanov's script of *The Overcoat* was published (in Russian) as: Tynjanov, J. *Shinel'-libretto*, Leningrad, 1926; it was reprinted in: *Iz istorii Lenfilma (From the History of Lenfilm)*, vol.3, 1973.
  23. About the evolution of the script of *Lieutenant Kizhe* see: Toddes E. "Concluding Remarks", in: Tynjanov, J. *Podporutchik Kizhe*, Moscow, 1981, pp.164-200.
  24. Kozintcev, G. *Collected Works*, vol.2, Leningrad, 1983, p.28; Garin, E. "Obogastchenie literatury", in: *Literaturnaja gazeta*, Moscow, January 15, 1935, p.2.
  25. Kaverin V., Novikov V. *Novoje zrenije (The New Vision)*, Moscow: Kniga, 1988, p.202.
  26. M. Sosa & B. Harvey. "Introduction", in: Tynjanov, J. *The Problem of Verse Language*, Ardis, Ann Arbor, 1981, p.10.
  27. However, Tynjanov does not deny the existence of emotionality on a certain level of verse, but he stresses that this emotionality is a secondary property, and is always defined and limited by the particularities of the verse structure itself.
  28. R. Jakobson, J. Tynjanov, *Problems of the Study of Language and Literature*, Prague, 1928.
  29. "Yuri Tynyanov in Prague", in: Tynjanov. *The Problem of Verse*

*Language*, pp.135-140.

30. Tynjanov. *The Problem of Verse Language*, p.64.
31. Ibid., p.64.
32. Ibid., p.91.
33. Ibid., p.92.
34. Ibid., p.93.
35. Ibid., p.93. The term "compactness" stands for the Russian "tesnota", i.e., "compactness of a series" is for "tesnota riada". Literally, in Russian "tesnota" means "narrowness", "tightness", "closeness".
36. Ibid., p.93.
37. Ibid., p.95.
38. This simple trick is still widely used by different directors. See, for example, the parallel montage of the final events in *The Silence of the Lambs* by which the feeling created is that that the police surrounds the same country house inside which the character played by Jodie Foster fights the maniac. Only after a long series of parallel actions we come to the realization that the police has surrounded a completely different house in a completely different place.
39. Eisenstein, S. "Za kadrom" ("Behind the Shot"; 1929). We quote the English translation of this article: "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram", transl. by I. Montagu and S. Nolibandov, in: Eisenstein, S. *Film Form*, Ed. and trans. by J. Layda, San Diego: A Harvest/HBJ Book, 1992, (below — *Film Form*), pp.29-30.
40. Ibid., p.30.
41. Eisenstein, S. "O stroenii veshchej" ("On the Structure of the Things"; 1939). We quote the English translation of this article: "The Structure of the Film", in: Eisenstein S. *Film Form*, p.159.



42. Eisenstein S. *Collected Works*, vol.2, p.270.
43. "Mudretc" was based on A. Ostrovskij's (1823-1886) realistic play *Na vsiakogo mudretca dovol'no prostoty* (*Homer sometimes nods*). The adaptation for the theater was done by S. Tretjakov.
44. Eisenstein, S. "S. Eizenshtejn o S. Eizenshtejne, rezhissjore kinofilma "Bronenosetc 'Potiomkin'." ("S. Eisenstein on S. Eisenstein, as the director of the film "The Battleship 'Potemkin'", 1926), in: Eisenstein, S. *Selected Works*, vol.1, p.544. We quote the English translation of this statement: Eisenstein S. "Personal Statement", in: Eisenstein, S. *Film Essays and a Lecture*, ed. J. Layda, New York — Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1970, p.14.
45. Eisenstein, S. *Selected Works*, vol.2, p.40.
46. Tynjanov's letter to V. Shklovsky, March 31, 1929 (in Russian); in: *Vospominanija o J. Tynjanove* (*The Memoirs on J. Tynjanov*), Moscow, 1983, p.28.
47. Tynjanov. *The Problem of Verse Language*, pp.101, 117-118.
48. Ibid., p.128.
49. Ibid., p.93.
50. Ibid., p.93.
51. Ibid., p.94
52. Pavel I. *Sobranie anecdotov, otzyvov, kharakteristik, ukazov i pr.* (*Paul I. A Collection of Anecdotes, References, Orders, etc.*), eds. Geno and Tomitch, Sankt-Peterburg, 1901, pp.174-175.
53. See: Yury Tynyanov. *Lieutenant Kije. Young Vitushishnikov*. Two novellas translated and introduced by Mirra Ginsburg, Boston, Massachusetts: Eridanos Press, 1990. The problem of the possible objective existence of absolute emptiness was a subject of Tynjanov's interest even before he turned to the plot of *Lieutenant Kizhe*. G.

Kozintcev recalls that in the middle of the 1920's Tynjanov recounted to him (with great passion) another anecdotal story of the eighteenth century: in accordance with an order of the highest command a long-existing ordnance depot ("somewhere in Russia") was liquidated; but a special order to close up a guard's post was not issued; thus, for a long time the details guarded the empty place where previously the depot had been situated. Cf., *Jurij Tynjanov. Vospominanija. Razmyshlenija. Vstrechi.* (*Jurij Tynjanov. Memoirs, Thoughts, Meetings*; in Russian), Moscow, 1966, p.167.

54. We intentionally avoid to speak about political and ideological connotations which, of course, immediately arise here (if we can keep in mind that Tynjanov wrote his script, firstly, in the end of the 1920's, and, secondly, in the USSR). We are just trying to consider Tynjanov's work as a purely formalistic experiment in the context of the general theory of poetics only.

55. Tynjanov. *The Problem of Verse Language*, p.84.

56. Ibid., pp.86-88.

57. Tynjanov. "Ob osnovakh kino" ("On the Fundamentals of Film"), in his: *Poetics*, p.336.

58. Ibid., p.339.

59. The script of the silent version of *Lieutenant Kizhe* has not been published. We quote (and give our own English translation of) it as it is partly presented in: M. Jampol'skij "Poruchik Kizhe' kak teoreticheskij film," *Tynjanovskij sbornik*, Riga: "Zinatne", 1986, pp.28-43 (we would like to mention that the article by Jampol'skij consists of some observations which can be defined as similar to ours). The text set up in italics was supposedly intended to appear as credits. The script of the sound version of *Lieutenant Kizhe* is completely

- different from the silent one; it was published (in Russian) by Heil Jerry as a part of his "Jurij Tynjanov's Film-Work. Two Film-scripts: *Lieutenant Kizhe. The Monkey and the Bell*" in: *Russian Literature*, North-Holland — Amsterdam, 1987, vol.XXI, No.4.
60. Eisenstein, S. *Film Form*, p.78. In *Film Form* the listed types of montage are placed in the article under the title "Methods of Montage", not in "The Filmic Fourth Dimension". In the Soviet edition of the works of Eisenstein (*Selected Works*) the text of "Methods of Montage" is just a part of "Chetvertoje izmerenije v kino" ("The Filmic Fourth Dimension").
61. Ibid., p.82.
62. Ibid., p.64.
63. To denote a cut of a film with only one shot Eisenstein uses the Russian word "kusok", which has a rather wide spectrum of meanings: "cut", "piece", "part", etc., but to our mind, actually by "kusok" Eisenstein means simply a "shot".
64. Jakobson, R. "Dominanta" (in Russian translation), in: *Khrestomatija po teoreticheskomu literaturovedeniju* (*A Reader in the Theory of Literary Criticism*), vol.1, Tartu, 1976, p.56; originally published in English in: *Readings in Russian Poetics*, eds. L. Matejka and K. Pomorska, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1971.
65. Tynjanov. *The Problem of Verse Language*, pp.31-35.
66. Ibid., p.33. In Tynjanov the "dominant" and the "constructive principle" are synonyms.
67. Eikhenbaum B. *Melodika stikha* (*Melodics of Verse*), Petrograd, 1922, p.9.
68. Eisenstein, S. "Za kadrom" ("Behind the Shot"; 1929). We use the English translation of this article: "The Cinematographic Principle

and the Ideogram", transl. by I. Montagu and S. Nolbandov, in: Eisenstein, S. *Film Form*, pp.38-40.

69. Eisenstein, S. *Film Form*, pp.64-68. It is very interesting to follow and to analyse the process of evolution of the definition of the term "montage" in Eisenstein's works. The different definitions of "montage" are contained in his articles and papers (in chronological order): "Montazh attrakcionov" ("Montage of Attractions", 1923), "Bella zabyvayet nozhnitcy" ("Bella Forgets the Scissors", 1926), "Nezhdannyyj styk" ("The Unexpected Joint", 1928), "Budustcheje zvukovoj filmy" ("The Future of the Sound Film", 1928), "Za kadrom" ("Behind the Shot", 1929), "Chetvertoje izmerenije v kino" ("The Filmic Fourth Dimension", 1929), "Odolzhajtes'!" ("Have Some!", 1932), "E! O chistote kinojazyka" ("Eh! On the Purity of Film Language", 1934), "Srednaja iz triokh" ("The Middle One of the Three", 1934), "Montazh" ("Montage", 1935-37), "Vystuplenije na vsesojuznom tvorcheskom sovestchanii" ("Speech at the USSR Artistic Session", 1935), "Programma prepodavanija teorii i praktiki rezhissury" ("The Program of Teaching the Theory and Practice of Directing", 1936), "Montazh" ("Montage", 1938), "Vertikal'nyj montazh" ("Vertical Montage", 1940), "Dikkens, Griffit i my" ("Dickens, Griffith and Us", 1942), "Neravnodushnaja priroda" ("The Not-Indifferent Nature", 1945), "O stereokino" ("On the Stereocinema", 1947). Our English translation of the Russian titles is literal and in some cases different from the existing translations of Eisenstein's works.

70. It brings together Tynjanov's works with the technique of montage in Eisenstein's *Potemkin* or *Strike*, or, in literature, with the "montagic" poetics" of *Manhattan* (1925) by John Dos Passos and

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with the theatrical experiments of Berthold Brecht, who considered montage as a major constructive principle of his “epic theater”.

71. We have in mind his book *Die Philosophie der Kunst* (Hanau, 1909) which was very popular inside OPOJAZ. On its significance in the history of Russian formalism see, for example: A. Hansen-Löve. *Der russische Formalismus*, Wien, 1982, pp.190-215, 316-335.